

**Amendments to the Claims**

Claims 1-24 (canceled).

25. (currently amended) A process for regenerating a catalyst comprising perfluorinated ion-exchange polymer with pendant sulfonic and/or carboxylic acid groups entrapped within and highly dispersed throughout a network of metal oxide, wherein the weight percentage of perfluorinated ion-exchange polymer in the microcomposite is from about 0.1 to about 90 percent, wherein the size of the pores in the microcomposite is about 1 nm to about 75 nm, ~~and wherein the microcomposite optionally further comprises pores having a size in the range of about 75 nm to about 1000 nm,~~ comprising the steps of :

- (a) contacting the microcomposite with an acid; and
- (b) removing the excess acid to yield the regenerated catalyst.

26. (original) The process of Claim 25 wherein the perfluorinated ion-exchange polymer contains pendant sulfonic acid groups and the metal oxide is silica, alumina, titania, germania, zirconia, alumino-silicate, zirconyl-silicate, chromic oxide and/or iron oxide.

27. (currently amended) The process of Claim 26 ~~57~~ wherein the metal oxide is silica and ~~said microcomposite further comprises pores having a size in the range of about 75 nm to about 1000 nm.~~

Claims 28-56 (canceled).

57. (new) The process of Claim 25 wherein the microcomposite further comprises pores having a size in the range of about 75 nm to about 1000 nm.

- 58. (new) The process of Claim 25 wherein the acid is nitric acid.